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Contributions to UNDP rise only slightly in 1995 — "Lost Opportunities" in development could result

Donors are expected to pledge some US$980 million for the United Nations Development Programme's core resources for 1995. The amount is based on commitments made at the recent UN Pledging Conference for Development Activities, held in New York on 1-2 November, as well as on estimates of pledges that are still to come. The $980 million figure represents a six per cent increase over 1994 in nominal terms, largely due to the weakening of the US dollar. But even at $980 million, 1995 pledges would still fall short of the 1992 level by approximately $100 million.

Speaking at the pledging conference, UNDP Administrator James Gustave Speth said that "the funds pledged here support programmes that help developing countries make real and sustainable progress in improving the lives of their citizens. But unfortunately, this progress is jeopardized by the precipitous decline in contributions that started in 1993." In that year, resources for UNDP's core programmes were 15 per cent below the 1992 level. In 1994, resources were slightly above the amount pledged for 1993.

The people who are hurt the most by

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UNDP co-sponsors first donor conference for South Africa

Representatives from nearly 50 governments and more than 25 international non-governmental organizations gathered in Cape Town, South Africa from 26-28 October for the first major donor conference under a new and democratic South Africa. The central theme of the conference was human resource development. The conference represented the first substantial exchange between South Africa and the international community on the subject of the country's Reconstruction and Development Programme, which is a comprehensive and integrated development plan for South Africa.

Jointly sponsored by the Commonwealth Secretariat and UNDP, the conference enabled the participating officials to discuss practical means to promote effective coordination, partnership and rapid delivery of development resources.

"UNDP is committed to working with the Government of South Africa, with relevant national institutions and with the South African people to adopt a human-centred approach to development," said Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Assistant Secretary-General of the UN and

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P. Magabane/UNDP

South Africa is now working to translate its Reconstruction and Development Programme into practical actions to fulfil basic needs of the majority of its people.

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Contributions, *continued*

the cutbacks in ODA and to UNDP in particular are the poor, Mr. Speth said. Nearly nine-tenths of UNDP's funds support programmes in the poorest countries, with per capita incomes of less than $750. Most of its assistance actually goes to the least-developed countries, many with per capita incomes of less than $200 a year.

These cutbacks extend far beyond cancelled programmes and broken promises and amount to lost opportunities, the UNDP Administrator said: "Opportunities to improve people's lives, opportunities to protect the global environment, and opportunities to wipe out the scourge of underdevelopment and poverty, which threaten to undermine peace and the numerous advances in living standards made in the past four decades."

Saying that it would be more humane, effective and less expensive to act preventively to meet development needs today than to have unmet needs confront us as crises tomorrow, Mr. Speth called for an increase in allocations for development and urged governments that have not yet pledged to note the heavy toll that cutbacks have taken on the poorest countries of the world.

Mr. Speth also cited several countries for their generous contributions, including Spain and Portugal, who have announced 30 per cent and 67 per cent increases respectively. He thanked Germany, the Netherlands and Luxembourg as well for their pledges.

Several developing countries also won praise for increasing their contributions to UNDP. Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Hungary and Zimbabwe doubled the size of their contributions, while other countries, including Romania, Cape Verde, Gambia, Malawi, Poland, Ghana, Turkey, the Republic of Korea and India all made significant increases. Mr. Speth also welcomed South Africa's participation in the Pledging Conference and thanked its government for its generous first-time pledge of approximately $221,000.

UNDP's associated funds and programmes, namely the UN Capital Development Fund, the UN Development Fund for Women, the UN Volunteer Programme and others received as a group an estimated $46 million for 1995. While thanking governments for these pledges, Mr. Speth called the amount too small given "the great value of these programmes." He proposed that donors double their contributions to these efforts in the coming year.

South Africa, *continued*

Director of UNDP's Regional Bureau for Africa. "Without people-centred development, there would be no peace, no respect for human rights and human dignity, no environment regeneration, no population control, and no sustainable development," added Mrs. Johnson-Sirleaf in her speech to the opening session of the donors' conference.

Delegates concluded that the success or failure of the Reconstruction and Development Programme will depend on strong local institutions. They recommended that capacity-building programmes focus on local institutions in communities and in local governments. They also urged the involvement of civil society in defining development goals. In addition, they concluded that development planning must better involve sectors of society which have in the past been marginalized — women, rural communities, youth and the disabled.

Participants commended the steps taken by the South African government to establish a nationally-managed body to coordinate aid in support of the Reconstruction and Development Programme. In that regard, the conference delegates welcomed the establishment of an Interdepartmental Committee on International Development Cooperation to coordinate development assistance and to liaise with the donor community.

Progress made in talks on Social Summit

More than 150 countries involved in preparations for next year's World Summit for Social Development reached a broad consensus on the shape of the final negotiating texts. The Summit, the first major UN conference devoted solely to social development, will be held from 6-12 March in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Organizers see it as an essential first step in rallying national and international action to eliminate poverty, unemployment and the key causes of social disintegration. More than 40 heads of state or government have already announced plans to attend, and many more are expected.

Although some areas of disagreement remain, there was wide agreement among delegations that the latest talks had produced clear guidelines for the Summit Secretariat to use in drawing up new drafts of the two basic texts: a Declaration — consisting of nine key "commitments" and a five-part Programme of Action. The new texts are expected to be ready by early December.

The talks, held from 24-28 October, consisted of five days of informal consultations. Their aim was to clarify the structure and substance of the texts. "Personally, I am very happy

about the results of this week," said Ambassador Juan Somavia of Chile, who oversaw the talks in his capacity as Chairman of the Preparatory Committee. "We still have much work to do, but we have greatly clarified the issues."

The representative of Algeria, current Chair of the 131-member "Group of 77" developing countries, declared that "we have made definite progress since the second PrepCom."

New documents emerged from the session. One, a "Background note presented by the Chairman", is a distillation of the elements proposed for inclusion in the Declaration. It was assembled by Ambassador Somavia and the Summit Secretariat.

The other document, prepared by Mr. J.N.M. Richelle of the Netherlands, is titled "Note presented by the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole". It is a summary of the agreements — and disagreements — over the language, organization and substance of the Programme of Action.

Mr. Richelle and Ambassador Somavia both reported that the chief areas of disagreement continue to be the follow-up to the Summit and the resources needed to put its commitments into action.

Negotiators plan eventually to integrate the two texts. The Declaration would proclaim broad commitments to social development, while the Programme of Action would explain how those commitments would be put into action.

Mr. Richelle said that there had been substantial agreement on the chapters of the draft Programme of Action dealing with poverty, unemployment, and social integration, but "differences of view remain on such economic issues as debt relief and ODA". While there is "a growing consensus" on such issues as the need to incorporate social dimensions in structural adjustment programmes, Mr. Richelle went on, "specific actions nevertheless remain to be worked out".

Journalists' round table on Social Summit themes

Preparations are underway for two major media gatherings relating to the World Summit for Social Development: in Santiago, Chile, 24-25 November; and in London, 11-12 January.

The Santiago round table will bring together about 10 journalists from major news organizations in Latin America to meet Chilean journalists, a number of eminent Chileans, including former President Patricio Aylwin and the new Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jose Miguel Insulza, and leading United Nations officials. They will discuss issues to be addressed by the Summit.

In London, some 35 journalists, including foreign correspondents and top journalists from Europe and the Middle East, will gather at the Foreign Press Association. Co-sponsored by DPI, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the danish government, the round table is aimed at stimulating media coverage of the critical issues of the Summit.

Approved projects:

(all projects subject to modification; sums quoted in US dollars)

Afghanistan — Animal Health and Livestock Production Programme—

The aim of this programme is to restore and improve the health and productivity of the livestock of farmers in Afghanistan. The animal health care system will continue to be developed through this programme. Technical assistance will be provided for the development of poultry hatcheries. Training will be offered in the areas of basic animal health care. In addition, the constraints confronting the country's livestock production system will be analyzed.

UNDP contribution: $5,489,790. Third-party cost-sharing: $2,020,000. Funds will be used for equipment, subcontracts, national personnel, and international personnel in animal health and animal production, and one UN Volunteer in training and development of rural women. (AFG/93/004)

Afghanistan — Integrated Crop and Food Production — This project will consolidate the activities of various agriculture sectors such as seed production, crop protection, and dryland farming. Technical advice and training will be provided in these fields. The aim will be to promote an integrated crop and food production strategy to attain food security and improve the living standards of rural communities.

UNDP contribution: $7,037,000. Third-party cost-sharing: $10,000,000. Funds will be used for experts, equipment and subcontracts. (AFG/94/002)

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First country programme for the Czech Republic — The Czech Republic is one of the two successor Republics that came into existence in January 1993, when, with the agreement of both parts, the former Czech and Slovak Federal Republic ceased to exist. The Czech Republic has embarked on a radical, wide-ranging programme of economic transformation to a market economy.

The Government of the Czech Republic and UNDP have agreed on selected thematic areas in which UNDP assistance should concentrate. Restructuring the economy, investment promotion and support for the private sector are major areas of concentration. Emphasis will be put on transfer of know-how to key sectors of the economy, and promoting small and medium-scale enterprises. Training and human resource development is another area of emphasis. In the arena of environmental management, the programme will concentrate on implementation of Agenda 21 at the national level. UNDP will support capacity-building in the areas of energy efficiency, technology cooperation and transfer, and trade and environment. UNDP contribution: $1,799,000.

Lebanon — Fiscal Reform and Administration — The rehabilitation of public finance administration is one of the main prerequisites for the social and economic development of the country. This project will help to modernize the customs administration, reorganize the tax administration, and strengthen the operations of the Ministry of Finance.

UNDP contribution: $1,549,334. Government cost-sharing through a World Bank loan: $2,327,694. Funds will be used for training, equipment, subcontracts. (LEB/92/017)

Yemen — Strengthening of Water Resources Management Capabilities — This initiative will help establish a Water Resources Authority which will assess projects and investments in the water sector. A computerized water resources information system will be established. A regional study on water quality and water resources protection will be conducted. Guidelines for the evaluation of water-related projects will be determined.

UNDP contribution: $2,066,050. Cost sharing from the Netherlands: $2,253,777. Funds will be used for training, personnel, equipment and subcontracts. (YEM/93/010)

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